**RYHALL PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**
**Wednesday 11th March 2015**
**In the Methodist Church Schoolrooms, Ryhall.**

**PRESENT**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mr P Huddleston (Chairman) | Mrs E Sismore | Mrs S Smith | Mr R Rushby |
| Mr A Gombault | Mr N Bellairs | Air Cdre D Wilby | Mr J Whowell |
| Mr S Fenn | | | |

XX member of the public was in attendance

**APOLOGIES – Mr C Parsons**

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 12 March 2014 were acknowledged. It was proposed by X seoncded by X and agreed to accept them as a true record.

**RYHALL PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Report by Mr Paul Huddleston

'The period between March 2014 and March 2015 has been an active one for Ryhall Parish Council. Councillors and, in this year, our two clerks have all dedicated much personal time to make substantial improvements to benefit the parish; with some projects ongoing I hope we can continue to maintain that momentum. We have done this using our existing funds and with valued assistance from Rutland Country Council. We are pleased we have been able to do all this while keeping the preceptpaid by parishioners the same since 2010.

The year has not been without its challenges. But we dedicate ourselves to be as fair as possible to everyone, giving support to all those who need it while ensuring the majority of our parishioners are confident that the council is utilising public money carefully and responsibly.

Last year saw several presentations during council meetings and afterwards:
One was from Energy Action in which parishioners were offered advice on saving money on fuel charges; another from National Grid where it outlined plans for a substation in the parish and invited bids for Community Funding. The village hall was successful and able to benefit from refurbished lighting. Work on the substation continues.

We have also made improvements to the new cemetery with regular hedge cutting and new gravel for the driveway. The council thanks Dave Toone for his invaluable work with Burial Administration.

Work was carried out on the vicarage wall and roadway to the school but the project is still yet to be finalised. The council continues to press for action

The council decided to have a defibrillator installed centrally in the parish. It is now in place at the village hall and a successful information evening was held in December. My thanks to Nick Bellairs for leading this vital lifesaving project.

A Four-Year Plan has been instigated with the aim of seeing what the parish assets are, how they can be utilised for the future, and what other needs we may have. My thanks to the team of David Wilby, Adrian Gombault and Jon Whowell for their work on the

questionnaire distributed in July, its analysis and the consequent follow-up studies. The main issues in focus are the future of the Library and setting up Ryhall Neighbourhood Watch which Adrian is leading.
We may take the Four-Year Plan a step further with a more formal and structured Neighbourhood Plan in 2015/16 where we would aim to have in place proposals that would be in general conformity with the Rutland Local Plan.

Communication, as ever, is key to improvements and the parish aims to launch a dedicated website for the forthcoming year.

Other progress included the council agreement in January 2015 to take over the parish grass cutting as from 1st April 2015.

On the council we have representatives and committee members dedicated to planning, street lighting, allotments, trees, footpaths and grass cutting. Their work ensures that all these matters are administered efficiently and without fuss.

As an example, the planning committee that includes Stella Smith, Bob Rushby, Emma Sismore and Nick Bellairs was as ever watchful on planning applications for the parish: 24 planning applications considered to date, including four tree applications. Bob also kept an eye on footpaths, Simon Fenn on lighting while Chris Parsons continues his essential work as our County Councillor as well as playing fields representative.

And as always my thanks go to the other volunteers who make up our village committees: the village hall management committee and the meadows playing fields committee. The village hall committee continue to ensure that the building remains welcoming and the ever-pleasant centre of village activities. It also continues to pay its way, something very much to be proud of. The meadows playing field committee have seen at long last the removal of the portacabin, further internal improvements to the pavilion and continued upkeep of the roadway. The playing fields were also the subject of a positive Sports facilities and green spaces review.

The Allotment holders in this parish year opted to take over the management of the land from the parish council. It is now a vibrant hub for all things green with all plots taken and more ambition for improvements.

We also have a Ryhall Commemorative Flagpole and Garden group now that there is a flagpole in St John's Close. This was dedicated in November 2014. We are grateful for the efforts of the Diamond Jubilee Committee for making that possible.

The council has been watchful on travel and traffic in its area.
We have supported a plea for a speed restriction in Newstead Lane, Belmesthorpe, as part of a NHW Speed Review. We have also seen the completion of the new dual cycle route / pedestrian path round Ryhall from Rutland Way to Essendine Hill. My thanks go to Rutland County Council for following up our request to make this route safer for all. There is also a bike rack being installed at the library.

Our roads were made safer in the cold snaps by our Snow Wardens. I must thank Peter Link, who has relinquished the role after four years, and welcome George Roberts.

I mentioned earlier that we have two clerks. We have been very lucky in that Derek Patience was able to step in at short notice as acting clerk during a difficult period when Caroline Adams was suddenly taken ill. We owe him a big debt for keeping us on track. Caroline returned in the summer and once again put in an enormous amount of valuable time and effort for the parish. She is now due to have major surgery and I know the council will wish her well in her recovery.

As you know the council elections are in May. Tonight is the last time we will have this line-up. Certainly we will lose Simon Fenn who no longer lives in the parish. Simon has been a valued and dedicated parish councillor for 22 years. We will miss him.

I do hope that other people will follow his example in wanting to join the council and give something back to their community. The job is not difficult but it does require patience, dogged determination and an understanding of human nature. The rewards are however many and we can all take a pride in what we do.

And there is much pride in Ryhall and Belmesthorpe. Whenever I walk around the parish I am impressed by how much people love this place.
I think of the dog walkers who on the coldest and darkest of winter nights take their torches to ensure the walkways are free of mess, the person who put twinkly lights on the bridge to Belmesthorpe at Christmas time and the villager who set up signs about "horse muck" on the path near the mini roundabouts. They show they have the best intentions for their parish. This is heartwarming. All of you and all of our volunteers share this devotion. It gives great hope for the future'

**RYHALL VILLAGE HALL**
Report by Mrs Anne Virgin - Secretary

During the last year, the village hall has been improved internally by the redecoration of the small room behind the kitchen, the toilet block has been repainted externally, new energy efficient lighting has been installed throughout the hall, courtesy of a grant from the National Grid. The hall has once again had various smaller jobs completed on it to keep it up to the high standard expected by our hirers.

The financial results for the period from April 2014 to February 2015 show that the Hall continues to run on a sound financial basis. Income from lettings is 32% up on last year with both organisation and individual lettings showing a considerable increase of 25% and 54% respectively. Income from lettings and fund raising is £11,603 against expenditure on running costs and routine maintenance of £9,440. This shows that routine costs are covered by regular income by a margin of 123%, a very creditable performance and the best for many years. Hiring fees remain at the same level this year. Running expenses show a welcome reduction after their seemingly inexorable rise for a number of years. Repairs and maintenance costs continue to be low for a building of this age at £1,395. 96% of capital expenditure (£2,213) has been for new, energy efficient lighting throughout the hall, most of which was covered by a donation from National Grid.

We continue fundraising with monthly Bingo sessions, the sale of a Christmas calendar, two different postcards, lunch club and two concerts put on by the Irish Hooley Band Ruff 'n' Ready together with the Irish Dancers. These two concerts alone made a profit of £1269.33 for our funds.

We have a good, loyal committee but have tried, unsuccessfully to attract more people onto the committee.

The village hall remains at the centre of the community and social life for many villagers and the committee endeavours to ensure that it is run smoothly for the benefit of us all.

**RYHALL MEADOWS PLAYING FIELDS (RMPFA)**
Report by Mr Andy Capper - Chairman
**Sports areas**

Pitch repairs and reseeding were carried out again at the end of the football season. Repairs were also carried out to the floodlights after the cables were pulled away from their fixings.
We now have a contract in place between RMPFA and the football clubs which allows them seasonal booking of our facilities, and helps them comply with FA guidelines.
Tennis and Bowls Clubs continue to be well run by their respective committees. Both clubs would like more members, particularly young people.

**Play Areas**
We have carried out the repairs and replacements recommended to the play equipment in last year's RoSPA safety report. I am pleased to say that this year`s inspection reported our play area to be low risk with only minor recommendations here and there due to expected wear and tear.

**Public Areas**
The portacabin has now been removed the ground cleared of old concrete foundations and the area reseeded.
Thanks to help from the parish council a new kissing gate was installed on the footpath to Belmesthorpe and the car park has been given a new layer of gravel.
Dog walkers are generally obeying the new signs and there appear to be fewer instances of owners not clearing up.
We have a problem with rain water caused by the lack of drainage on Vicarage lane. The parish clerk is currently awaiting the responses of the County Council and Ryhall Primary School as their cooperation is needed to find a solution.
We intend to install a trim trail around part of the playing field perimeter this year, for which we have been granted precept money.

**Sports Pavilion**
We had to have considerable repairs carried out to the roof and interior ceilings and electrical fittings, which followed water damage caused by children jumping onto the pavilion roof from the portacabin.

Alterations for disabled users have been made to the kitchen and toilet area, as well as improvements to the buildings access.
**Community Orchard**
The first stage of the orchard has begun with the planting of six cherry trees and stage two is being investigated with the hope of planting a harvestable hedge on the southern boundary.

Once again I should to thank my fellow committee members for their hard work and Ryhall Parish Council for their support.

**RYHALL LIBRAY**
Report by Mr Robert Clayton
**Opening Hours**
With the support of a precept from Ryhall Parish Council, Ryhall Library is open:
Mondays 10am – 12noon, 2pm – 5pm
Thursdays 10am – 12noon, 2pm – 7pm
Saturdays 10am – 1pm
The library is open15 hours per week, at an annual cost of £2,500 to the Parish, which covers the Saturday hours.
**Service Changes**
Significant issues have been experienced with the ICT service at the library in Autumn and Winter 2014. The issues with the public

internet connection have now been resolved, and replacement PCs are being ordered to improve the service further. It is hoped these
will be installed before April.
A Self-Service terminal has been ordered for the library, and is due to be installed in mid-March, which should both improve the speed
of service experienced by library users, and enable extended use of the library.
Rutland County Council is in discussions with Parish Representatives to investigate other ways to improve the service, and an extensive
report has been created by Adrian Gombault outlining potential options. RCC is happy to continue working on these ideas, and
volunteer recruitment is already underway. We look forward to implementing these ideas in 2015-16.
Nationally, there have been significant changes in the provision of library services, and many communities have seen both reductions in
opening hours and significant falls in both visitor numbers and loans of books. Happily in Ryhall, this trend has not been experienced,
as the tables overleaf show.

**Visitor Figures**

Thanks to Parish Council support, the library has welcomed 2,567 visitors on Saturdays since April 2013, which is around 30 each day.
This has contributed to an overall increase in visitors from 6,506 in 2013 to 6,827 in 2014.

**ALLOTMENTS**

Report by David Pearce - Secretary

**2014 review and strategy.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Apply to the Parish council to run the Allotments as an association. | Agreed |
| Form a Committee to manage the Allotments. | Completed |
| Renew all Tenancy agreements and collect the rent in a timely manner. | Completed |
| Manage the plots to ensure that they are being cultivated and not overgrown. (If not being cultivated, the tenant will be spoken to) | On going |
| Improve access to St Tibbia way. | Completed |

**2015 Review and ongoing strategy.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Cut all hedges that border the site to a manageable size. | Completed |
| Improve vehicle access to the manure area. | Completed |
| Join NSALG and take out Public liability insurance. | Completed |
| Reinstate abandon plot to a reusable condition. | On going |
| Install 3 new water butts and move 1 with a new service box. | On going |

**2016 projects.**

Erect a 6 foot fence the length of the Ryhall Road entrance.
Improve and define the site pathways.

**Letting Officers Report**

3 people on the waiting list – They have been contacted and updated on availability.
Make people aware of the new £30 bond for the allotments.
Encourage all to attend functions and participate.

**Site maintenance officers Report**

Review of last year to include, St Tibbia entrance, gravel of communal area, green house available for all to use.

**2015 projects**

| | |
|---|---|
| Hedge cutting and control | Completed |
| Ryhall road entrance improvements – Gravel entrance | Completed |
| Install 3 new water butts | on going |

**Entertainments officers Report**

Since last June there have been several social events, here are just a few:
Currry and soup spring warmer
Wimbledon comes to Ryhall function that went very well. Strawberries were in abundance, as were the Pavlovas and an Eton Mess.
On Gala Day we had a pitch and tent which sold donated items.

In October we had our first Conker Day.
Our last event was the Fireworks night. We hoped it would be well attended and we were not disappointed.
These events are to be repeated this year with the addition of an event around the beginning of September which will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.